

# ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

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On Other Pages

Eight South African Churches to Confer with WCC . . . . .	2
Baptists Hold World Congress in Rio . . . . .	3
Greek Synod Objects to "Heretical" Advertising . . . . .	4
Swiss Roman Catholics Pray for Lausanne Youth Assembly . . . . .	5

Special Report

Christians Involved in "Sit-In" Strikes . . . . .	7
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Japanese Christians Explain Opposition to Treaty

(Tokyo) - A group of 26 Japanese Christian leaders has sent an open letter abroad claiming broad-based popular opposition to the Mutual Security Pact with the USA and attributing the mass feeling against it to revulsion against war and nuclear weapons.

Declaring that the Kishi government had used police methods to try to rush the pact through, the signers deny that the rioting in Tokyo before President Eisenhower's planned visit was purely Communist. They say the demonstrations were "participated in by all kinds of people and all strata of society".

The letter regrets the impression of anti-Americanism whipped up by extremists of left and right and says the "popular protests were not primarily directed against America".

In explanation of the attitude of the crowds the letter emphasizes that "fear of nuclear destruction makes mothers and sons quake at the threat of re-armament and possible military draft. This fear is then compounded by indications of resurgent militarism and fascist groups."

Continuing, the message says: "Disappointment over the failure of the Summit Conference, distrust aroused by the U-2 incident and the resultant heightening of international tension made the Japanese people very anxious about the possibility of being involved in a nuclear war which they do not want. Such



anxieties and fears readily turned into opposition to the proposed treaty, which was looked upon as a limitation of Japanese independence, and resulted in antagonism against the stratagems of Prime Minister Kishi and his party."

Noting that "many reports of the participation in demonstrations of some students of Christian schools and of Christian pastors and laymen have been published in the West", the declaration observes that "these people are not Communists; nor are they following Communist leadership. They did not participate in violence, although several were injured by attacks from rightist groups while standing quietly near the Diet building. Those who participated did so as individuals, not as representatives of their schools or churches. The common bond uniting them with other demonstrators was opposition to war and rearmament, and to what they considered the undemocratic attitude of the government."

In an appeal to recipients of the letter, the signers write: "While democracy is still very young in Japan and its foundations are not yet secure, we are confident that it will survive assaults from the left as well as the right. We pray that our Christian brethren abroad will give to our country their prayers, their patience and their understanding. We are desperately praying for the guidance of God, the Lord of history, over our nation, lest it be thrown into the same type of blind anti-Communist despotism which Korea recently experienced."

The signers include Christian university professors, pastors and church administrators. All have travelled abroad.

EPS, Geneva

#### Eight South African Churches to Confer with WCC

(Geneva) - The eight member churches of the World Council of Churches in South Africa have accepted a proposal from the World Council of Churches that it convene a "fully representative" consultation of their leaders in South Africa with a representative delegation from the WCC.

The plan was put forward in May by the executive officers of the WCC, following a visit to South Africa by one of the Council's associate general secretaries, Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer. The meeting will discuss the responsibilities of the churches in the current situation in the Union of South Africa.

The time, place and arrangements for the meeting will not be fixed until Dr. Bilheimer returns from a visit to South Africa in mid-July to confer with the churches about details.

Negotiations are proceeding on another invitation issued in May by the WCC to the Council's three Dutch Reformed member churches in South Africa and the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican), calling for a meeting between the Dutch Reformed and Anglican churches.

In its invitation proposing the consultation of its eight member churches, the WCC suggested that it should seek to arrive at a "factual understanding" of the basic factors involved in the situation and of "our understanding of the meaning of the Gospel for relationships between races". It also recommended that there be a discussion of steps presently being taken by the South African churches "to help establish ..... justice and peace", and of the implications of rapid social change in Africa.

Member bodies of the WCC in South Africa are: the Dutch Reformed Church of Transvaal, the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape, the Hervormde Church, the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican), the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Bantu Presbyterian Church and the Congregational Union.

EPS, Geneva



Baptists Hold World Congress in Rio

(Rio de Janeiro) - Dr. Theodore F. Adams, president of the Baptist World Alliance, opened the tenth Baptist World Congress in Rio de Janeiro (June 26 - July 3) with a plea for world-wide religious liberty, racial justice and Christian brotherhood, and for the spread of the Gospel to all people.

Dr. Adams's presidential address followed a roll call in which representatives of 67 nations followed their national flag across the broad stage and spoke into the microphone, each in his own language, the words of the Congress theme from Philippians 2:11: "Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father."

Dr. Adams told the 20,000 assembled delegates that because of Baptists' concern for racial justice and Christian brotherhood, the Alliance will not hold a Congress in areas in which there is discrimination or segregation based on colour or national origin. "We seek to be one in Christ who has broken down the middle wall of partition between us", he declared.

Basic to justice, brotherhood and peace, Dr. Adams said, is recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and absolute freedom for individuals to make their own choices in matters of religion.

"For this reason", he said, "Baptists have long emphasized the priesthood of all believers. We have no priestly hierarchy and no mediator between God and men save Jesus Christ our Lord."

Dr. Adams reported that the number of Baptists in the world has grown from twenty million when the Congress met in London in 1955 to more than twenty-three million in 107 countries today, and is nearly four times the size of the community when the Alliance was organized in 1905. EPS, Geneva

YMCA Secretaries Back from USSR

(Geneva) - Four American YMCA secretaries who have spent a month studying youth work in the USSR have advocated further investigation of Soviet methods, especially in culture and sport.

The Y workers, passing through Geneva on their way home from the visit, were: Dr. Ray Johns, Boston; Francis S. Minnerly, Ohio-West Virginia; Frank C. Kiehne, St. Louis; and Robert W. Harlan, Milwaukee. They were invited to go to the USSR on exchange with four Russian youth leaders, who have toured YMCA work in the USA under the cultural exchange programme.

With a guide and interpreter, the YMCA team went to Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi and Tashkent. They reported a total membership of over 40 million in official Soviet organizations for youth from nine to twenty-eight, and said programme, leadership and facilities were good.

The YMCA leaders confirmed reports by other travellers that the Soviet youth groups keep emphasizing both the drive for a Communist society through "labour and defence" and the importance of world peace. (See also EPS No. 14)

EPS, Geneva

Socialist Says Church is Free in East

(Berlin) - The general secretary of the East German Communist-sympathizing Christian Democratic Union claims that the Church is "really free" for the first time under socialism.



Gerald Götting told a party congress at Erfurt that the Church in Eastern Europe is not forced like the Church in capitalist countries "to find religious justification for reactionary state policy or decorate it with religious trap-pings".

Herr Götting said socialist society created "strong bases for the development of civic freedom and freedom of the Church" because of its absolute separation of Church and state. "The Church itself", he declared, "which regards separation from the state as theologically justified, achieves its own freedom and for the first time shows real tolerance toward non-Christians".

The Socialist leader's statement also said "the lie about the alleged oppression and persecution of the Church in the DDR" was a weapon of imperialism and political clericalism. EPS, Geneva

#### Greek Synod Objects to "Heretical" Advertising

(Athens) - The Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church has complained to Greek newspapers about Gospel messages placed as advertisements in the Greek press.

In a letter sent to the newspapers, Archbishop Theoklitos of Athens and eight metropolitans describe the Rev. Spiros Zodhiates, general secretary of the American Mission to Greeks, who lives in America and wrote the messages, as a "sect leader" and "nationally dangerous".

The Synod's letter insists that the advertisements should indicate "the sect to which the writer belongs" or "the Holy Synod will be forced to address an encyclical to the Greek people to make known to them that the published religious articles are heretical".

Synod leaders believe a government decree of 1938 requires identification of the writers of all non-Orthodox printed material. Mr. Zodhiates claims the decree applies only to books and pamphlets and not to newspaper advertising. The Gospel messages of Mr. Zodhiates have been appearing for eighteen months in over 100 Greek newspapers and magazines. EPS, Geneva

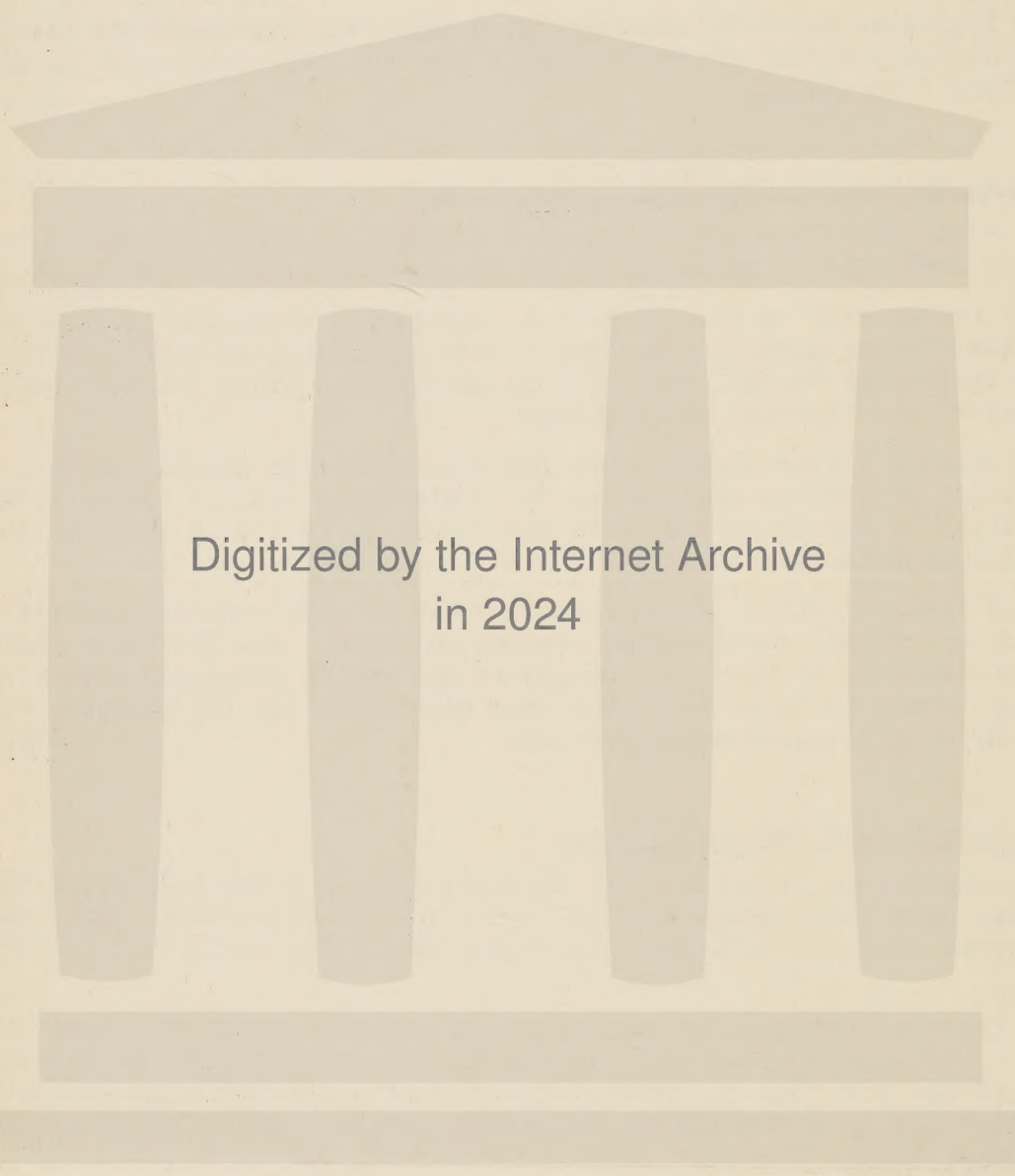
#### Churches Report from Devastated Chile

(Geneva) - More than 44 per cent of the population - a total of 1,131,550 persons - have been left homeless in the ten provinces of southern Chile ravaged during recent weeks by earthquake and tidal waves. The death toll is estimated at 1,500.

The figures, representing approximately 15 per cent of the total Chilean population, are given in reports received by the World Council of Churches in Geneva from the Rev. Theo A. Tschuy, director of Ayuda Cristiana Evangelica, joint relief agency of the Chilean churches, Lutheran World Relief and Church World Service (USA).

The report estimates more than 169,000 dwellings in the ten provinces have been destroyed or damaged with losses exceeding 400 million dollars (US). Damage runs as high as 95 per cent in Chiloé where there are 121,600 homeless. In addition 100 of the 300 Protestant churches with full-time pastors in the area were destroyed.

Funds contributed by the world's churches in response to emergency appeals from the WCC's Division of Inter-Church Aid now total \$277,213 plus tons of food, clothing and medical supplies. This includes contributions by Chilean churches in unaffected areas of \$1,177, plus food and clothing.



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"In all this trial", Mr. Tschuy reports, "Chilean Protestantism has proven to possess remarkable cohesion and a great sense of social obligation." He noted the growing strength of Protestant churches in southern Chile and that ACE aid was the first in the disaster areas.

"In Concepcion on the first day, about 1,000 persons were given food and blankets .... The next day about 9,000 people came to our distribution centre at the Methodist Church", he reports. When supplies ran out, a riot was averted by local authorities who explained that the churches would continue to do everything they could to help. Assistance has also been organized in outlying areas including a soup kitchen in Temuco to which 40 tons of food were shipped by rail.

Contributions from the churches reported to date are: Australia, \$1,130; Great Britain, \$14,000; Denmark, \$1,021; France, \$1,000; Germany, \$238,000; New Zealand, \$2,772; Netherlands, \$9,500; Lutheran World Relief, \$1,500; Jamaica Christian Council, \$70; American College, Bogota, \$200; Centre Social, Geneva, \$20; Norway, \$1,000; Sweden, \$2,000; Church World Service (USA), \$5,000.

Supplies sent included \$4,000-worth of relief supplies from the Netherlands churches, 80,000 pounds of food and multi-vitamin tablets, anti-typhoid serum and penicillin valued at \$15,000 air-lifted within the first few days of the emergency by Church World Service (USA) and 1,500 blankets and 115,000 pounds of clothing sent jointly by CWS and Lutheran World Relief (USA). EPS, Geneva

#### Berlin to Welcome Inter-Church Aid Meeting

(Berlin) - Blueprints for a big world-wide programme of church aid to the needy will be drawn up at a meeting in Berlin, July 20 - 26.

The seven-day meeting will be the annual consultation of the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches, the co-operative relief and rehabilitation agency of the WCC's 172 member churches of the Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox confessions. Some 150 church relief officials, ICA secretaries, missionaries and others from Europe, the USA, the Middle and Near East, Africa and Asia are expected to attend. It will be one of the largest World Council-sponsored gatherings ever held in Germany.

Major agenda topics will be consideration of acute human need including co-operation with the five-year Freedom From Hunger campaign of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation which starts this month.

A highlight of the meeting will be a reception to be given by Bishop Otto Dibelius, president of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), on Monday evening, July 25. Dr. Dibelius is one of the WCC's six presidents.  
EPS, Geneva

#### Swiss Roman Catholics Pray for Lausanne Youth Assembly

(Lausanne) - Catholic Action in French-speaking Switzerland has asked its members to pray for the European Ecumenical Youth Assembly at Lausanne, July 13 - 24.  
(See EPS Nos 10 and 17)

A group of observers from Catholic Action will join in the meeting of 1700 young people, 1400 of them from Europe.

Commenting on Roman Catholic interest in the Assembly the Fribourg Catholic press service KIPA says it is "a great event that interests all Christians, whatever their denomination. Indeed it is by entering into the mystery of Jesus Christ that Christians will find the way to perfect union within a single visible Church so that the world might believe."



"Today it seems", continues KIPA, "that the world is on the eve of a decisive choice between faith in the living God and atheism. All believers must take their part in helping the world to make such an important choice."

EPS, Geneva

### In Brief

The National Conference of the Methodist Student Movement (USA) has expressed concern about the possible influence of religious bigotry in considerations of candidacy for the US presidency. A statement adopted by the MSM's annual meeting said each candidate's "actual religious convictions, as distinguished from his particular affiliation, should be paramount" and "no candidate should be rejected or denied careful consideration purely on the grounds of his religious affiliation".

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Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, executive secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, has returned to work in Geneva after five months health leave in the United States, including treatment and rest following attacks of high blood pressure and secondary symptoms.

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The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria has been granted full autonomy by the Church of Scotland's Eastern Nigeria Synod preparatory to the declaration of Nigeria's independence from Britain on October 1. Missionary work formerly directed from Scotland will from now on be in the hands of the autonomous church.

\* \*

Father Jan Willebrands of the Netherlands has been named as secretary of the secretariat set up by the Pope to keep non-Roman Catholics in touch with the work of the forthcoming Second Vatican Council. Dr. Willebrands was appointed two years ago as a full-time worker on ecumenical questions by the Archbishop of Utrecht and is already secretary of the International Roman Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions. He was present last August at meetings of the Central Committee of the WCC on the Island of Rhodes. The head of the Secretariat on Christian Unity for the ecumenical council is Cardinal Augustin Bea. (See also EPS No. 23)

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An independent group in England is publishing a bi-monthly international magazine called "The Anglican World". Edited by the Rev. Peter Harvey, founder of England's "Church Illustrated", the new publication, with many pages in colour, reports the life of the world-wide Anglican Communion.

\* \*

Father Matias Acuesta, a Roman Catholic missionary priest from Spain, has announced a month-long campaign to eradicate Protestantism in the town of Colobares in northern Colombia. At his insistence the local mayor has closed the Protestant chapel and school. Father Acuesta has repeatedly threatened and harassed Protestants in the district.

\* \*

A sentence of five months imprisonment and a fine of \$50 imposed on Protestant evangelist Michael Markogamvrakis by the court in Neapolis, Crete, has been revoked on appeal by a higher court in Heraklion. The sentence was imposed for proselytizing among Greek Orthodox people. (See also EPS No. 23)

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The Pope has told members of Italian Catholic Action that he expects the work of the Second Vatican Council to begin in two years.

\* \*

Indonesia's National Council of Churches has a new headquarters building in Djakarta on a main approach to the city. The building, shared with the Indonesian Bible Society, Christian Education Council, Student Christian Movement and Christian University staff, displays the ecumenical "ship" symbol on a prominent notice board.

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For the winter Olympics at Innsbruck in 1964, the local Protestant community plans to erect an Olympic church. It will appeal to foreign and international church organisations for funds.

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"There are still places in the USSR where the best building in the village is not the club but the church, and the best choir (sometimes the only one) the church choir", states an article in Izvestia (Moscow) which advocates stronger and more practical methods of anti-religious propaganda. EPS, Geneva

## A Special Report

### Christians Involved in "Sit-In" Strikes

(New York) - Recent events at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee, concerning the Rev. James Lawson (see EPS Nos 11, 12, 13, 22, 23, 24, 25) are part of a wider context of "sit-in movements" in the South.

The "sit-in" demonstrations against segregation began in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1 of this year when a small group of Negro students walked into a store and sat down quietly at a lunch counter which served white customers only. The students sat until the store closed without receiving service. This incident was the first of many similar demonstrations which spread within days through the universities of the South. By April over 1,000 Negro students in at least 68 cities of 13 states had been arrested on various charges.

The spontaneity of these demonstrations, according to experienced observers, has startled some Southerners into thinking that the change they had hoped to postpone indefinitely is actually taking place. Civic and state authorities have hesitated in many instances to deal with this unprecedented situation; in some towns - like Nashville, Tennessee and Baltimore, Maryland - the demonstrations have met with success and resulted in the integration of lunch counters. In other towns reprisals have been drastic and the demonstrations were quickly subdued. In Mississippi, where segregation is strongly enforced, there have been no "sit-ins".

The methods of the students in demonstrations have ranged from sitting-in at lunch counters and libraries, picketing of theatres and public facilities, poster-walking and prayer vigils to mass demonstrations and holding of rallies. Action has been almost consistently non-violent. An instruction sheet drawn up by leaders of the movement in Nashville urges the demonstrators not to strike back if abused, to be friendly and courteous at all times, to "remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mohandas K. Ghandi and Martin Luther King", and to "remember love and non-violence".



Martin Luther King, a Baptist minister, has been a recognized champion of Negro rights since the Montgomery (Alabama) bus strikes which resulted in the desegregation of the buses there in 1956. In the opinion of many, his successful leadership in these strikes heralded the beginning of the passive resistance movement.

Describing his first contact with the teachings of Ghandi, Dr. King writes: "I have come to see for the first time that the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Ghandian method of non-violence was one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom." He says difficulties must be faced and is convinced that the South will experience more violence before the Negro wins the respect he is seeking, but he says that violence should be used against rather than by Negroes.

Inspiration of the demonstrations is to a great extent Christian. Herluf Jensen, director of the National Student Christian Federation in the USA, who returned recently from a prolonged visit to the South, described how the meetings of the students are opened with prayer, hymns are sung, and speakers virtually deliver sermons.

The NSCF was one of the first Christian organisations to come forward in support of the students. On March 6 its Central Committee sent a "Letter to Christian Students" expressing "a deep concern for, and involvement in, the recently initiated and now widespread student demonstrations, which are seeking the end of discriminatory lunch counter policies in stores and public buildings".

Practical aid has been pledged by the NSCF to students (Negro or white) who are expelled from their universities in the form of scholarships, enabling them to continue their studies elsewhere. Legal advice for those arrested and aid for those injured in demonstrations have also been offered. The NSCF has been acting as a disseminator and source of information about the "sit-ins".

Students in Northern universities have engaged in "sympathetic" picketing and boycotting of chain stores which in some states do not serve Negroes at their counters.

In an attempt to co-ordinate the movement a conference was organized in April at Shaw University, a Negro Baptist School in Raleigh, North Carolina. It was brought together mainly through the efforts of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organisation founded with the purpose of extending franchise among Negroes. Martin Luther King, president of the SCLC, and James Lawson were among the main speakers at the Raleigh meeting.

Christian comment on the future of the "sit-ins" has been mostly positive but cautious. A typical document, produced by the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church says: "We are grateful that the movement has been characterised by peaceful methods in the accomplishment of its purposes; we are equally grateful that they have evoked little retaliatory violence. As Christians we are concerned about means as well as ends, and earnestly pray that in the critical months ahead Christians of all views will continue to seek their desired ends in a spirit of mutual love, understanding and restraint."

EPS, Geneva

